DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 216 773 PS 012 846

AUTHOR Klein, Charlotte M.; Pelow, Randall A.
TITLE Research Findings Concerned with Fathers' Impact on Their Preschoolers.
PUB DATE May 82
NOTE 28p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Child Development; Cognitive Development; Fatherless Family; *Fathers; Language Acquisition; *Parent Child Relationship; *Parent Influence; *Parent Role; *Preschool Children; School Readiness; Sex Role; Socialization

ABSTRACT

This paper discusses research findings concerned with the reemergent recognition of the role of the father in early childrearing, the attitudes these fathers have towards their parenting role, and the identifiable impact they have on their progeny. Following a brief review of the literature on (1) how the American culture prepares boys for fatherhood, and (2) problems in beginning fatherhood, a discussion is presented of specific spheres of paternal influence on the child's development (including language acquisition, socialization, cognitive development, and sex role development.) The influence of paternal absence on the child's development is also briefly examined. Finally, the paper focuses on fathers of children approaching school entrance and discusses the importance of this event for the father and also the importance of the father to the event. (MP)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

ED216773

RESEARCH FINDINGS CONCERNED WITH FATHERS' IMPACT ON THEIR PRESCHOOLERS

by

Charlotte M. Klein and Randall A. Pelow

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Charlotte M. Klein
+ Randall A. Pelow
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

May 1982

PS012846

RESEARCH FINDINGS CONCERNED WITH FATHERS' IMPACT ON THEIR PRESCHOOLERS

In an examination of recent research concerned with the role of the father in early childrearing, one of the most striking discoveries one makes is the paucity of such research prior to the late 1960s. There follows a resurgent interest from the 1970s to the present time. Biller (1974) attributed this dearth to the Freudian influence which placed such emphasis on the relationship between young children and their mothers that all other early attachments paled in comparison. Bowlby (1969) was another author whose work on attachment focused so exclusively on the maternal bond that the father's influence was neglected. Others (Sears, Maccoby and Levin, 1957) stated that the American father spent so little time with his children that it was simply too difficult to do direct studies. This latter explanation is one reason given for why so many of the first father studies were concerned with the absence, rather than the presence, of fathers in young lives. The growing glomeration of studies suggested that the paternal parent is, indeed, a person of importance in the lives of his offspring, and that he does, indeed, merit considerably more attention.

This paper is thus concerned with the reemergent recognition of fathers, the attitude these fathers have toward their parenting role, and the identifiable impact they actually have on their progeny. An additional focus will be on fathers of children approaching school entrance, the importance of this event for the father, and the importance of the father to the event.

The first topic to be considered will be how our culture prepares boys for fatherhood. Then the experience of first being a father will be explored. There will follow a discussion of specific spheres of influence, namely: language acquisition, absence of the father, cognitive growth, socialization, and sex role development. The paper will conclude with comments on school entrance as viewed by the father.

Preparation for Fathering

Young boys in contemporary American society have not only been given little training for fatherhood--they have actually been discouraged from seeking such experience. Whereas our young girls have been routinely supplied with dolls and concomitant paraphenalia with which to practice for mothering roles, boys are provided with toy weapons, vehicles and construction games, hardly the substructure of parenting (Fasteau, 1976). Likewise the home economics and child development courses offered in our schools have long been the domain of females, and a boy showing interest in these areas has risked mockery by his peers. To want to spend much time with young children has been suspect for males of any age. As Fasteau (1976, p. 92) commented:

> Being a father, in the sense of having sired and having children is part of the masculine image; but fathering, the actual care of children, is not. Men who spend a lot of time taking care of their children--washing, dressing, feeding, comforting and playing with them--aren't doing quite what they should.

Problems in Beginning Fatherhood

When a man first becomes a father in the United States he often feels excluded and extraneous, especially in regards to the birth situation. Our predilection for hospital-based births has, until recently, tended to exacerbate this pattern. By barring the father from the

delivery room and then limiting his contact with his newborn (allegedly for reasons of sanitation) the secondary nature of his position has been underscored emphatically. The growing trend to include fathers in labor and delivery rooms will probably benefit nascent families in numerous ways, not the least of which is improving the father's image of himself as a parent.

Greensberg (1973, p. 526) found that first time fathers who had access to their newborns while still in the hospital ". . . began developing a bond with the newborn by the first three days after birth and often earlier." There was a tendency, in his study, for fathers who had witnessed the birth to feel freer to handle the infant and to express more confidence that they could distinguish their baby from among a group of babies. An increased sense of self worth was also found among these fathers. This would seem to augur well for the development of a positive stance toward parenting.

One obvious reason that fathers may have more trouble in establishing a relationship with their progeny than mothers do is that the maternal link is so much more biologically obvious. By carrying the child for nine months, and then giving birth, a mother sets up an indisputable link with that particular child. Through nursing the connection is solidified even further.

No such easily discerned connection exists between fathers and their babies. Kitzinger (1978) commented that this was the reason all societies have some method or way of marking and distinguishing fathers. She (1978, p. 64) added, "Many otherwise incomprehensible practices have meaning when seen in this light."

There are, however, psychobiological forces present that may help predispose human males toward a fathering function. Biller (1974) mentioned man's curiosity, his tactile sensitivity, and a nurturant instinct that he believed emerges under certain conditions. Another factor which he described is the reinforcement humans feel when they are imitated by others--a pattern that occurs with great frequency from child to adult. As language is one of the areas in which this imitation factor is most visible, a discussion of paternal influence on language acquisition follows.

Language Acquisition

In an oft-cited 1971 study by Rebelsky and Hanks (Rubin, Provenzano, and Luria, 1974; Lamb, 1976; Clarke-Stewart, 1978; Forisha, 1978; Mackey and Day, 1979; and Colman and Colman, 1981), small microphones were attached to 10 infants periodically during the first three months of their lives. By analyzing recordings made of vocal interactions between infants and their parents, the researchers came to the conclusion that fathers spent the incredibly low average of 37.7 seconds per day speaking to their infants. Mackey and Day (1979) have questioned the widespread use of these data which Rebelsky and Hanks (1971) themselves noted were based on a self-selected group of only ten fathers.

A more recent study by Golinkoff and Ames (1979) found that in a free play situation in a laboratory, with father, mother and child present, the father did actually speak less to the child than did the mother. However, the father was just as likely as the mother to adjust the length and complexity of his utterances to the child's level, and he understood the developmental stage of the child as well as the mother did. These researchers commented that perhaps both parents were assuming that

as the primary caregiver the mother knew the child best and could "show off" the child to more advantage in the experiment. Their sample was, unfortunately, not much larger than the one used by Rebelsky and Hanks (1971), having only twelve familial triads.

Masur and Gleason (1980) added a complex toy car to a free play type of situation and studied the ways mothers and fathers provided and elicited lexical information from their 2 to 5 year olds. They discovered that the men elicited a statistically significant amount of information over women. They (1980, p. 408) asserted:

> More fathers than mothers described the functions of the various car parts, thus extending and elaborating their children's lexical knowledge. The fathers in this study were also more linguistically and cognitively demanding of their children than were the mothers.

It is possible that the fathers felt more confident to explain the workings of a car than the mothers did, a flaw which the researchers noted could be overcome in a future study by using an equally complex but sex-neutral toy.

A frequent question of researchers is whether mother's and father's verbal interaction differs according to the gender of the child being addressed. Maccoby and Jacklin, in their definitive review of the sex role literature to 1974, concluded that the majority of studies failed to show a difference in the type or length of utterances to girl-children versus boy-children.

One new aspect of research involving fathers is that in the last ten years fathers have been interviewed, and/or observed directly, far more often than in previous years. In 1957 Sears, Maccoby, and Levin (1957, p. 8) conducted a massive study to determine "How parents raise their children." They queried 379 mothers and not a single father. This was not unusual at the time. Fortunately the tenor of parenting studies,

as suggested by a review of the literature, is no longer so lopsided. Radin (1978) and Field (1978) have actually found enough fathers who have assumed the role of primary caregivers in their families to do comparative studies of primary and secondary caregiving mothers and fathers.

Radin (1978) found that the sons of primary caregiving fathers tend to be more empathic than sons of traditional fathers. She also found some evidence that children's verbal abilities increase with more exposure to their fathers. In her work, Field (1978) observed that with 3 month old infants the behavior of primary caregiving fathers was more similar to the behavior of primary caregiving mothers than it was to the behavior of secondary caregiving fathers. This would suggest that familiarity with the youngster and one's day-to-day functioning are more important than any innate or even societally imposed sex role orientation to parenting. Obviously, as more such fathers become available for study it would be desirable to expand on this work.

The only two factors in which Field (1978) found the fathers' scores were more similar than the primary caregivers' scores were in how often the infants were restrained and the amount of gameplaying that occurred. Fathers were less likely to restrain the infants physically, and more likely to engage in gameplaying. Because gameplaying is a consistent thread in many studies, it will be explored in more depth later.

Paternal Influence on Children's Cognitive Development

In his discussion of the parents' influences on a child's schooling, Hamilton (1977, p. 147) remarked that:

> It is difficult for a particular parent to exert much control over his child's school or his teacher. But parents often do inquire about the school system before moving into a new area, send their children to private or parochial schools, or have the child transferred from a particular teacher's classroom.

Less directly, the parents exert considerable influence through their attitude toward education, authority, homework, and so on. These messages about how much parents value or scorn education go a long way toward determining how much a given child will value education. Radin (1976), one of the most productive researchers in the area of father's effect on cognitive growth, remarked that the link between a father and son has a direct and easily discerned influence on the cognitive style of the son. According to Radin (1976, p. 269), "There are indications that powerful fathers foster their sons' cognitive development, provided the power is not used to intimidate the boys while they are involved in mastery efforts."

The link between fathers and the intellectual development of girls is more circuitous. Radin (1976, p. 269) found that a degree of autonomy and distance from the father seems to foster cognitive proficiency, ". . . although specific interest in his daughter's academic progress appears to stimulate her intellectual development."

It would seem that fathers are inclined to give their daughters mixed messages about cognitive development. Many fathers tended to be more supportive of dependent "feminine" behavior in girls than the active and assertive behavior which is associated with school success. This would help to explain why distance from the father may be necessary for developing mastery skills, unless a girl has a very supportive father regarding intellectual growth.

Paternal restrictiveness is another important variable in the issue of cognitive development for both genders of children. This factor is often associated with the disparity between lower class and middle class children. In two different studies, Radin (1971, Epstein and Radin, 1975) found a positive correlation between IQ and nurturance by middle class fathers. No such link was found for lower class boys. With them the more common pattern was a negative connection between paternal restrictiveness and cognitive development. The researchers (1975, p. 838) suggested that ". . . in the working class, where sex-role stereotypes are strongest, intellectual and academically oriented activities are viewed as feminine and hence not appropriate for boys." Thus the boys used in these studies had conflicts about wanting to please the experimenters (who were expected to provide rewards), and wanting to maintain their male stereotypic patterns.

This trend was not found among father-daughter relationships in either class. They (1975) suggested that perhaps among young girls the mother is really a more important mediator of cognitive growth. One must not, however, rule out the father's indirect influence through the mother in this (and all) areas of child development. It is not really possible to say that any influence is totally traceable to father or mother, considering the dual nature of parenting.

Other ways the father influences his children in their cognitive development are through his genetic background, the attitudes he holds about himself and his children, his position in the family system, the material resources which he supplies to his family, his ethnic heritage, and the goals he sets for his family (Radin, 1976). Even when he dies or separates from the family, whatever memories he leaves behind continue

to have a powerful impact on his family constellation. This premise leads into the next area of discussion: what happens when the father is absent?

Paternal Absence

As noted earlier, some of the most serious concerns about fathering rose out of awareness of the detrimental impact of a father's absence. Blanchard and Biller have completed some impressive work in this area (Blanchard and Biller, 1971; Biller, 1974). Biller (1974) explained that over 10% of children in our society live in fatherless homes, and that in some ghetto areas the rate is over 50%. This does not take into account the fathers who live at home but spend so much time away that, as far as the children are concerned, they might as well not live there. They asserted that this sort of situation may be so frustrating for the children that sometimes it would be healthier for the father to be genuinely absent so that the children could proceed to search for a substitute male attachment figure. This point will be considered in more detail in the section about sex role development.

In their 1971 study, Blanchard and Biller compared boys whose fathers had left home (usually as a result of separation or divorce) before the boys were 5 years old, boys who had lost contact with their fathers after their 5th birthday, and boys whose fathers lived at home but spent less than 6 hours per week with them. The control group consisted of boys whose fathers lived with them and spent at least 2 hours with them daily. In comparing achievement test scores and school grades for these 44 white third graders, it was found that the boys with available fathers (2 or more hours daily) outscored the other boys in a statistically significant measure on almost every aspect of the tests

and grades. Their findings served as a catalyst for future researchers interested in more clearly delineating paternal parameters.

Biller (1974) declared that children who are paternally deprived are likely to adhere to a rigid sex role or to try to completely avoid expected gender-related behaviors. He suggested that it is helpful for father-absent boys to have male models available in school to help facilitate development.

Lamb (1976) took umbrage with the idea that a particular amount of daily interaction is an essential factor in a healthy father-child relationship. He (1976, p. 4) denoted, ". . . empirical and theoretical considerations indicate that the amount of time spent together is a poor predictor of the quality of the infant's relationship with either mother or father." Of more importance to Lamb was the sensitivity of the adult to the infant's communication signals and the quality of the interaction.

Lamb did accept Biller's reports that early father absence seems to be most detrimental (prior to the 5th birthday). He added that girls who had no father available experience difficulties in relations with males when they reach puberty. This idea will be elaborated on later.

Mediating effects in the father-absent situation are the reasons for the separation, the family composition and structure, the mother's behavior, and the mother's reaction to the situation. When a cherished father and husband has died the mother is likely to speak of him much more highly than will the woman who was deserted with several dependent children when her husband ran off with another woman. The mother can perpetuate a positive memory of the father with such reminders as, "Your father would have been pleased with your good report card," or she can denigrate the father to the child. Most harmful is when she generalizes

negative feelings about her (former) husband and speaks ill of men in general.

Herzog and Sudia (1973) in their extensive review of the literature on father absence, continually iterated how important it is to keep in mind the reaction of the mother, the extended family, and the community at large. They (1973, p. 207) pointed out that, "A recurrent finding is that, when family functioning and climate are analyzed, they loom as more important than the number of parents in the home."

Having both parents is, of course, beneficial in many ways. This should not be overlooked as being too obvious. Parenting is a big job, often too big for one adult alone. Weinraub (1978, p. 124) stated that, "Children have many needs, all of which cannot always be met by one person alone." Two parents can counterbalance the negative traits in each other's personality. If one is overly critical or overly permissive with the children, the other can help correct this proclivity. If one parent is temporarily (or for a lengthy period) incapacitated by illness or a draining outside involvement, the other can be available. The presence of two adults provides two models for the children, as well as a model of adult-to-adult interaction. And children do find comfort in the cultural normalcy provided by a two parent family. No matter how accepting others outside the family structure may be, children are usually aware of situations which deviate from the accepted norm.

If a child lacks a father, however, this does not necessarily loom as a tragic situation. As already mentioned, the mother's attitude toward the child, toward the father, and toward child-rearing alone are extremely important factors. The availability of other adult males such as teachers, neighbors, uncles, grandfathers, stepfathers, and older brothers, can make quite a difference in the development of young children.

Socialization and the Father

A survey of the research in regards to socialization in early childhood reveals that mothers and fathers are fairly similar in how they interact with children. The two areas where they do show consistent differences are in the way they deal with the children's sex-role development and the way they play with their children. Sex-role development is probably the most thoroughly studied area of father-child interaction and thus will be considered in a separate section.

Gameplaying, as touched upon earlier, is a much more prevalent pattern among paternal than maternal parents. From earliest encounters with their infants, fathers are noted to engage in more play behavior than mothers, and their play is more energetic and physical, usually to the emphatic approval of the infants. Lamb (1977) commented that children actually preferred fathers to mothers as measured by the amount of affiliative behavior addressed to each parent. He reached this conclusion from data obtained in studies of an observational nature carried out in the subjects' homes.

Both Belsky (1979) and Clarke-Stewart (1978) have noted this effect in home settings, but demur that it is based on the behavior of the parents at the time, not some long term difference in preference. Clarke-Stewart (1978, p. 476) suspected that the ". . . discrepancy reflects some tendency on the mother's part to let father--the 'playmate'--take 'center stage' in such situations. . . ." She also pointed out that when fathers were present, mothers were less engaging, responsive, directing and reinforcing with the children than when the fathers were not there.

Lamb (1976) discussed the positive correlation between nurturant fathers and altruistic, generous children. He also described several studies that have found fathers who use love-oriented discipline techniques to have a higher proportion of moral children than fathers who relied on physical punishment. Along these lines, Greif (1976, p. 232) commented that, "Fathers' attitudes and behaviors, along with children's perceptions of their fathers, seem to affect moral development." She pointed out that cultures with little father-son interaction have higher delinquency rates--perhaps because boys may see crime as the ultimate masculine behavior.

One unfortunate pattern in our society is the distance usually maintained between parental occupations and children. It is difficult to provide children with a clear picture of the "work world" that they will eventually join, when they are excluded even from their own parents' places of work. Children often do not even know what kind of work their fathers and/or mothers perform. In societies where parents (especially fathers) have agricultural occupations, or engage in home industries, the parent provides an ever-present and easily understood model. They can easily involve their offspring in their daily affairs. This has become increasingly difficult as more and more people work outside their homes, and as urbanization and advanced technology have prevailed.

There is also the "future shock" factor. Careers, social institutions, and technological items are changing so rapidly that it is often difficult to know what sort of world the current generation is being (or should be) prepared for. These writers feel that the most sensible approach is to encourage openness and adaptability, while trying to dispose of inhibiting stereotypes that serve to limit and stifle humans.

Some of the stereotypes that are currently receiving considerable interest are sex role stereotypes, which will be examined herewith.

Sex Role Development

In speaking of American sex role socialization, Forisha (1978, p. 4) commented that:

> We assume that boys will achieve and that girls will nurture others. We also assume that boys will be assertive and that girls will be receptive. Such assumptions about masculinity and femininity are part of a larger set of expectations about how men and women ought to behave. This set of expectations is called sex roles.

It is usually the father who is most concerned with transmitting these roles. As Rubin, Provenzano and Luria (1974) reported, fathers have already begun to sex-type their children within 24 hours of the child's birth. Mothers in their study applied gender-typing in a similar direction to fathers (expecting girls to be significantly finer featured, softer and smaller), but not so extensively.

As a result of these perceptions, and in accordance with cultural expectations, fathers are likely to encourage aggressive behavior from boys (such as rough-housing) and to pamper girls, encouraging flirtatious and dependent behavior. Maccoby and Jacklin (1974) found that boys on the whole receive more positive and more negative attention. They commented that this may be because boys are more treasured, because their aggressiveness calls for stronger socialization techniques, or because girls are assumed to be weaker and more sensitive. They (1974, p. 339) said:

> There is evidence that parents encourage their children to develop sex-typed interests, in part through providing sex-typed toys for them. Even more strongly, they discourage their children--particularly their sons--from engaging in activities they consider appropriate only for the opposite sex.

A possible reason that boys receive a stronger message about sex-appropriate behavior is the opprobrium attached to male homosexuality in our culture. A "tomboyish" girl is no particular threat to anyone, but a "sissyish" boy is not well accepted.

Girls often have the edge in this area because they are able to adopt characteristics of their fathers and get reinforcement for developing confidence and assertiveness, or they may follow a more passive female model and be rewarded for being traditionally feminine. For boys no such options are available.

According to Forisha (1978), the other characteristics traditionally associated with females are interest in people rather than objects, tenderness, nurturance, skill at interpersonal relationships, submissiveness, and empathy. On the negative side, girls and women are expected to be less rational, overly emotional, generally inferior to males, and nonmathematical.

The male stereotype involves assertiveness, interest in things more than people and relationships, capacity to be analytical and manipulative, skill in leadership, and a sense of self-worth tied in with being strong and dominant. The drawbacks for males are being unexpressive and unemotional, not being able to cry to help cope with emotional crises, and a lack of adeptness for personal affairs and small domestic affairs.

Weinraub (1978) argued that these masculine characteristics may actually interfere with being a good parent. She related that an ideal parent would be sensitive and responsive to needs of others, would enjoy interacting with children, would express warm and accepting feelings toward children, would set limits and be firm in directing children, and would take an active but nondirective role in allowing children to explore

their environment. It is obviously contradictory to expect a person to be warm and responsive at the same time that they possess characteristics of being unexpressive and unemotional. And how can a man be focused on the world of objects to the exclusion of people while being sensitive to children and enjoying interaction with them? It is little wonder that men find it difficult to be comfortable in a fathering niche.

Both parents serve as role models and children are usually rewarded for behaving in ways most similar to their same-sexed parent. The clothes, toys and furnishings provided to children are generally sex-typed. It would be considered inappropriate by most Americans to establish a boy in a bedroom with frilled pink and white bedclothes and curtains and to ply him with soft baby dolls, miniature kitchen sets, and play make-up. These items would be quite acceptable, however, for a girl-child.

Children also learn cultural definitions of gender-appropriate behavior from the other significant people in their lives (siblings, teachers, neighbors and relatives). For boys being raised by women alone, male peers may become the dominant socializing influence, especially when the boy is old enough to spend time away from his adult caregivers.

Forisha (1978, p. 334) discussed this point in connection with fathers being away at work:

> In our society most fathers are away at work most of the time and cannot provide an adequate model of masculine behavior. Consequently little boys turn to their peers and to stereotypes in the larger culture in order to draw a model of 'what it means to be a man.' Therefore they learn the caricatured features of the stereotypes that tend to emphasize physical strength and athletic skills; in adolescence they emphasize the ability to 'hold one's liquor' and heterosexual conquest. This model misses all the nuances of personal behavior that boys might observe in close association with an older male and emphasizes, instead, the most blatant features of what it means to be masculine.

Girls are usually more fortunate in having same-sex models available, such as mothers and teachers. The most likely process to go awry for girls who lack caring fathers is that they have problems relating to males during and after puberty. They either tend to shy away from heterosexual relationships or fall into promiscuous sexual patterns. Hamilton (1977) delineated a position that states that girls' patterns of role development are more complex than are boys'. He professed that for boys paternal warmth and nurturance can usually assure the development of culturally acceptable masculinity. For girls, on the other hand, warmth, nurturance and self-acceptance by the mother are crucial. However, girls are also strongly affected by their fathers, with a positive correlation between fathers' masculinity and the girls' subsequent femininity.

Biller (1974) suggested that sex-role identification begins early in life, by the second half of the first year. This would correlate well with his findings, mentioned earlier, that father absence in the early years is most detrimental to children. He asserted that an available involved male is important for the healthy development of a boy's image of himself as a masculine being. Support for this position was provided by Lamb (1976, p. 98) when he stated that, "The degree and quality of the father's involvement, even in the first year of life, have much influence on the child's behavior." He elaborated by saying that father absence before 4 or 5 years of age may retard masculine development by making a boy more dependent on peers, less aggressive, and prone to avoid games with physical contact. Having a caring father, actively concerned with his development, is so important to a boy, Lamb (1976) continued, that it may be more beneficial to have no father in the home

than an uninvolved one. As Lamb (1976) explained it, an unnurturant father provides a poor model, and his presence appears to be maladaptive in the boy's functioning. The assumption is that the boy will be freed to find a surrogate model when the unloving father is no longer present.

Forisha (1978) asked whether the inculcation of culturally acceptable sex roles is really adaptive, anyhow. With all the problems of our traditional sex role paradigms, should our society be seriously concerned that children with one parent present are not receiving conventional stereotypic training? She pointed out that the ideal situation would be one in which children have two powerful and loving parents.

Forisha (1978) argued further that the dichotomy imposed by traditional sex roles is maladaptive in contemporary society. When fathers are seen as powerful and mothers in contrast as loving, this makes love and power polar entities, which need not be the case. Better to have two strong and loving adults. The trend away from the strictures of rigid sex roles can be characterized as a move toward psychological androgyny, with androgyny being a state characterized by the presence of both male and female traits. In an argument for the inclusion of more male teachers in early childhood settings, Robinson (1981, p. 30) posited:

> The nontraditionalists base their view on empirical research on androgyny. This research indicates that the perpetuation of traditional sex-role behaviors for males and females seriously restricts behavior, especially for men. . . . The androgyny researchers concluded that rigid sex-role differentiation has outlived its utility and that the androgynous person achieves greater psychological health.

This is also the gist of Pleck's (1981) book, The Myth of Masculinity. He decried the limitations sex roles put on males, especially in light of the improved position of women in recent decades. Using Herzog and Sudia's (1973) review of research about fatherless children, he claimed that children do not seem to be appreciably harmed

when not trained in strict sex-roles. He accepted that there may be some basic biological causes of different psychological traits, but felt they were vastly overemphasized in our culture. He (1981, p. 83) related, "The point is not that we have to make men and women the same, but rather, that we do not have to strive so hard to make them different."

Earth Father/Sky Father: The Changing Concept of Fathering (Colman and Colman, 1981) is another recent book that sheds light on these new ideas about fathering. Using images from folklore around the world, the Colmans developed five models of fathering that greatly expand the conventional image of what a father is. Of the five models the most satisfying and complete is that of a dyadic father. This term represents a father that is part of a male-female, mother-father relationship in which both parents are concerned and caregiving, but both also have roles and power in the world beyond the home. They (1981, p. 59) cited: "Dyadic parents choose to work together on the life-long task of parenting in a way they hope will enrich both their separate and their collective identities." This model is closely allied with the psychological androgyny touted by Forisha (1978) and Robinson (1981), a model encountered more and more frequently in writings on this topic.

The Child's School Entry as Experienced by the Father

Whereas entire tomes (Bowlby, 1969, 1973) have been written about attachment and separation between mothers and children, an exhaustive search of the literature revealed little information about this topic with the father-child dyad. Fathers usually do not spend many of their waking hours with their children, and the attachment/separation issue has an entirely different dimension when father has been going off to

work every day all along. Nonetheless, there are studies that suggest that the child's move to join the wider world, as evidenced by school entry, is a possibly stressful event for the father. However, information that was available made reference only to fathers' reactions to their progeny's emergence into the school scene at kindergarten and first grade, not the preschool domain.

Rapoport and colleagues (1980) pointed out that school entrance can be seen by a family as a contradictory process. In one way it represents a loss of control over the child's life, and on the other hand, it frees the parents to spend more time in pursuit of their own interests. In this more positive vein, the school can be seen as a place where children receive important training that will help in the development of necessary skills. They (1980, p. 197) continued:

> Whether a particular family sees the child's entry into school as a loss or a relief, and whether the child itself is excited or terrified at the separation from family figures, children are required to enter school by their sixth year. Many parental responses to their children's pre-school developmental issues relate to the feelings that when their children enter school they will be judged as parents as well as their children be judged as scholars. . . .

Hock and her fellow researchers (1980) found these same issues to be germane in their interviews with forty fathers whose children were just beginning school. When asked what emotions they felt as the children began school, stress and anxiety were often mentioned. In fact, Hock and the others (1980, p. 469) stated that, "Over 50% of the fathers reported feeling anxious about their child's entry into school. . . ." Their anxiety was significantly related to family socioeconomic status, with the lower status fathers feeling more anxious. This was probably due to the fact that lower SES families often feel more alienated from societal institutions, such as schools.

Anxiety and sadness in the fathers were also positively related to maternal anxiety about the school entrance. Obviously, the parents were in communication and influenced one another. Hock and others (1980, p. 471) ventured that, "Fathers may have been reacting as much to mothers' emotional states and views--or vice-versa--as to the actual school entry of the child."

In spite of the burgeoning stockpile of data about fathers and children, this study by Hock and her colleagues (1980) is the only one these researchers could locate specifically about the school entrance issue. In view of the stressful nature of the event for fathers, and the resulting misapprehension that fathers may have about schooling for their children, it behooves the research community to pay more attention to this issue. Now that fathers have been rediscovered, and their importance has been established, scholars must begin to fill in the gaps in our picture of exactly who fathers are and how they influence their young children.

SELECTED REFERENCES

Ausubel, D. P., Sullivan, E. V., & Ives, S. W. Theory and problems of child development (3rd ed.). New York: Grune and Stratton, 1980.

Ban, P. L., & Lewis, M. Mothers and fathers, girls and boys: Attachment behavior in the one-year-old. Merrill-Palmer Quarterly, 1974, 20, 195-204.

Belsky, J. Mother-father-infant interaction: A naturalistic observational study. Developmental Psychology, 1979, 15, 601-607.

Bem, S. L., & Lenney, E. Sex-typing and avoidance of cross-sex behavior. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 1976, 33, 48-52.

Biller, H. B. Paternal deprivation: Family, school, sexuality and society. Lexington: Lexington Books, 1974.

Blanchard, R. W., & Biller, H. B. Father availability and academic performance among third-grade boys. Developmental Psychology, 1971, 4, 301-305.

Bowlby, J. Attachment and loss, vol. 1: Attachment. New York: Basic Books, 1969.

Bowlby, J. Attachment and loss, vol. 2: Separation. New York: Basic Books, 1973.

Cantor, N. L., Wood, D. D., & Gelfand, D. M. Effect of responsiveness and sex of children on adult males' behavior. Child Development, 1977, 48, 1426-1430.

Clarke-Stewart, K. A. And daddy makes three: The father's impact on mother and young child. Child Development, 1978, 49, 466-478.

Cohen, S., & Gouia, J. M. Fatherhood: Past and contemporary trends in parenting. Journal of Children and Youth, 1980, 38-44.

Colman, A., & Colman, L. Earth father/sky father: The changing concept of fathering. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1981.

Epstein, A. S., & Radin, N. Motivational components related to father behavior and cognitive functioning in preschoolers. Child Development, 1975, 46, 831-839.

Eversoll, D. The changing father role: Implications for parent education programs for today's youth. Adolescence, 1979, 24, 535-544.

Eversoll, D. A two generational view of fathering. The Family Coordinator, 1979, 28, 503-508.

Fasteau, M. F. The male machine. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1974.

Field, T. Interaction behaviors of primary versus secondary caretaker fathers. Developmental Psychology, 1979, 14, 183-184.

Forisha, B. L. Sex roles and personal awareness. Morristown: Scott Foresman and Company, 1978.

Golinkoff, R. M., & Ames, G. J. A comparison of fathers' and mothers' speech with their young children. Child Development, 1979, 50, 28-32.

Greif, E. B. Fathers, children and moral development. The role of the father in child development. Lamb, M. E. (ed.). New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1976.

Greenberg, M., & Morris, N. Engrossment: The newborn's impact upon the father. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 1974, 44, 520-531.

Grossman, F. K., & others. Pregnancy, birth and parenthood. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1980.

Hamilton, M. L. Father's influence on children. Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1978.

Heath, D. C. Competent fathers: Their personalities and marriages. Human Development, 1976, 19, 26-39.

Herzog, E., & Sudia, C. E. Children in fatherless families. Review of child development and research (Vol. V). Hetherington, E. M., & Riccinuti, P. (eds.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973.

Hock, E., & others. Child's school entry: A stressful event in the lives of fathers. Family Relations, 1980, 29, 467-472.

Howard, A. E. The American family: Myth and reality. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1980.

Hurley, J. R., & Hohn, R. L. Shifts in child-rearing attitudes linked with parenthood and occupation. Developmental Psychology, 1971, 4, 324-328.

Johnston, J. M. A symposium: Men in young children's lives: II. Childhood Education, 1970, 47, 144-147.

Kitzinger, S. Women as mothers. New York: Vintage Books, 1978.

Lamb, M. E. Fathers: Forgotten contributors to child development. Human Development, 1975, 18, 246-266.

Lamb, M. E. (ed.). The role of the father in child development. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1976.

Lamb, M. E. The development of mother-infant and father-infant attachments in the second year of life. Developmental Psychology, 1977, 13, 637-648.

Lein, L. Male participation in home life: Impact of social supports and breadwinner responsibility on the allocation of tasks. Family Coordinator, 1979, 28, 489-495.

Levine, J. A. Who will raise the children? New options for fathers (and mothers). Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1976.

Lewis, M., & Rosenblum, L. A. (eds.). The child and its family. New York: Plenum Press, 1979.

Maccoby, E. E., & Jacklin, C. N. The psychology of sex differences. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974.

Mackey, W. C., & Day, R. D. Some indicators of fathering behavior in the United States: A crosscultural examination of adult male-child interaction. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1979, 41, 287-299.

Marcus, R. F. The effects of children's emotional and instrumental dependent behavior on parental responses. The Journal of Psychology, 1976, 92, 57-63.

Masters, E. E. Parents in modern America: A sociological analysis. Homewood, IL: The Dorsey Press, 1970.

Masters, J. C., & Wilkinson, A. Consensual and discriminative stereotypy of sex-type judgements by parents and children. Child Development, 1976, 47, 208-217.

Masur, E. F., & Gleason, J. B. Parent-child interaction and the acquisition of lexical information during play. Developmental Psychology, 1980, 16, 404-409.

Noller, P. Cross-gender effects in two-child families. Developmental Psychology, 1980, 16, 159-160.

Pakizegi, B. The interaction of mothers and fathers with their sons. Child Development, 1978, 49, 479-482.

Pedersen, F. A. (ed.). The father-infant relationship: Observational studies in the family setting. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1980.

Petras, J. W. (ed.). Sex: Male/ gender: Masculine/ readings in male sexuality. Port Washington, NY: Alfred Publishing, 1975.

Pleck, J. H. Men's family work: Three perspectives and some new data. The Family Coordinator, 1979, 28, 481-488.

Pleck, J. H. The myth of masculinity. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1981.

Pleck, J. H. Prisoners of manliness. Psychology Today, 1981, 18, 68-83.

Pleck, J. H., & Sawyer, J. Men and masculinity. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1974.

Radin, N. Observed paternal behaviors as antecedents of intellectual functioning in young boys. Developmental Psychology, 1973, 8, 369-376.

Radin, N. The role of the father in cognitive academic and intellectual development. The role of the father in child development. Lamb, M. E. (ed.). New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1976.

Radin, N. Childrearing fathers in intact families with preschoolers. U. S., Educational Resources Information Center, ERIC Document ED 194 850, September, 1978.

Rapoport, R., & others. Fathers, mothers and society: Perspectives on parenting. New York: Vintage Books, 1980.

Rebelsky, F., & Hanks, C. Fathers' verbal interaction with infants in the first three months of life. Child Development, 1971, 42, 63-68.

Robinson, B. E. Men caring for the young: An androgynous perspective. The Family Coordinator, 1979, 28, 553-560.

Robinson, B. E. Changing views on male early childhood teachers. Young Children, 1981, 36, 27-31.

Rubin, J. Z., Provenzano, F. J., & Luria, Z. The eye of the beholder: Parent's views on the sex of newborns. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 1974, 44, 512-519.

Russell, G. The father role and its relation to masculinity, femininity, and androgyny. Child Development, 1978, 49, 1174-1181.

Sawin, D. B., & Parke, R. D. Fathers' affectionate stimulation and caregiving behavior with newborn infants. The Family Coordinator, 1979, 28, 509-513.

Schau, C. G., & others. The relationship of parental expectations and preschool children's verbal sex-typing to their sex-typed toy play behavior. Child Development, 1980, 51, 266-270.

Scheck, D. C., & Emerick, R. The young male adolescent's perception of early child-rearing behavior: The differential effects of socioeconomic status and family size. Sociometry, 1976, 39, 39-52.

Schulz, D. A. The changing family/ its function and future (2nd ed.). Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1976.

Sears, R. R., Maccoby, E. E., & Levin, H. Patterns of childrearing. Evanston, IL: Row Peterson and Company, 1957.

Stevens, J. H., & Mathews, M. (eds.). Mother/child father/child relationships. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1978.

Tauber, M. A. Parental socialization techniques and sex differences in children's play. Child Development, 1976, 50, 225-234.

Teitelbaum, M. S. (ed.). Sex differences: Social and biological perspectives. Garden City, NJ: Anchor Books, 1976.

Walum, L. R. The dynamics of sex and gender: A sociological perspective. Chicago: Rand McNally College Publishing, 1977.

Weinraub, M. Fatherhood: The myth of the second-class parent. Mother/child father/child relationships. Stevens, J. H., Jr., & Mathews, M. (eds.). Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1978.